



The New River Improvement Project



A Project of the California Mexico Border Relations Council and the City of Calexico

New River Improvement Project

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Imperial Valley Farm Bureau
1000 Broadway
El Centro, California 92243

Thursday
November 4, 2010
2:00 p.m.

Meeting Notes

- 1) **Welcome and Introductions.** The New River Improvement Project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair Ricardo Martinez (California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)) was unable to attend and Jose Angel was the designated chair in his absence. Jose called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. and welcomed all attendees. In attendance were the following committee members /designees/alternates: Jose Angel (Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board alternate TAC Chair), Juan Carlos Maturino (City of Calexico alternate), Andy Horne (County of Imperial designee) Steve Charlton (Imperial Irrigation District designee), Antonio Ortega (Office of Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez designee), Linsey Dale (Imperial County Farm Bureau). Committee members in attendance by phone were Daniel Garza (California Environmental Protection Agency alternate), Dr. Marilyn Underwood (California Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Branch), Luis Olmedo (Comité Cívico). Committee members unable to attend included Ricardo Martinez (California Environmental Protection Agency), Ema Rosa Silva (Calexico Community Representative/Vecinos de Calexico), Miguel Figueroa (Calexico New River Committee), Anna Malloy (California Department of Fish and Game, Bermuda Dunes Office), Eduardo Demesa (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Frank Gonzalez (CalTrans), Lisa Santana (International Boundary and Water Commission), Jonathan Ballard (U.S. General Services Administration), and Leon Lesicka (Citizens Congressional Task Force on the New River). Also in attendance were: Logan Raub ((Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board), Dr. Lee Schull (a consultant – by phone), John McCaull (a consultant - by phone), and facilitators Carl Nettleton and Gabriela Coverdale.
- 2) **Acceptance of Meeting Notes of October 14, 2010, Meeting.** Upon motion, Ortega and second, Horne, the notes from the October 14, 2010, meeting were unanimously accepted with one correction – item 5 section vi – finish the sentence with “be invited.”
- 3) **TAC Chair Update.** Designated Chair Jose Angel reported there were no updates from

Chair Ricardo Martinez.

- 4) **Signing of Charter.** Signatory members present at the meeting signed the Charter. The final charter will be emailed to all members again. Signatory members who were absent or called in are asked to print the signature page, sign it and send it in a PDF format to Carl.
- 5) **Update on CalTrans/Federal Funding for New River Parkway.** Juan Carlos Maturino was the designee for Luis Estrada. Juan introduced John McCaull and he introduced Dr. Lee Schull a consultant for the City of Calexico responsible for the CalTrans Request for Authorization allowing the distribution of the \$3.2 million federal grant for the New River Parkway obtained via CalTrans and the \$800,000 City of Calexico match. These funds will be reimbursed over two fiscal years (2009-2010 and 2010-2011). He reported that the caveat for these funds is that all funding is considered reimbursable and has to be used for parkway/bike path development only. More funds will be needed to finish the construction and environmental remediation. He said these funds cannot be used for the development of the Strategic Plan. Currently Caltrans preliminary field review is scheduled for November 18, 2010 in Calexico. This meeting is to introduce Caltrans to the site where the parkway and bike path would be built and the known environmental issues. This project is directly adjacent to the Port of Entry project. The City of Calexico will hire a New River Parkway Project Manager and then the project will move forward. Dr. Schull made it clear that it is important that the project is compatible with the Strategic Plan.
- 6) **Update from Workgroups.** The workgroup discussions included the following:
 - a) **Impairments/Remediation.** Jose Angel introduced Logan Raub (Regional Water Quality Control Board). Logan presented the update on the Impairments/Remediation Workgroup list of pollutants, their impaired stretch, reference information, recommendations and priorities (document attached). He addressed bacteria, sediment, trash and metals. He explained the importance of short term monitoring along the river from the border in Calexico all the way to the Salton Sea and how the levels of pollutants change at different locations within the river. He has GIS maps that he will be sending to Gabriela Coverdale. There are four monitoring stations for regulatory purposes. He said the data indicates pathogens, pesticides, and certain metals are of concern in the Calexico area. Pathogens are of concerns all the way to Brawley and pesticides to the Salton Sea. The work group is working with Mexican authorities to address the trash that comes from Mexico (Mexicali area). Funding to address this problem is one of the biggest challenges. Jose Angel asked the TAC for funding to contract with the Imperial Lab to analyze six samples twice a month at a cost of \$25.00/sample. They need approximately \$300/month until January 2011, then the Regional Water Quality Control Board will pay for the samples. Upon motion, Charlton, and second, Ortega, the TAC recommend that the Steering committee allow this work group to contract the Imperial Lab to analyze 12 samples a month.
 - b) **New River Visioning.** Miguel Figueroa was absent. No presentation for this

workgroup.

- c) **Funding/Background.** Andy Horne reported on this work plan. The members present voiced their concern not to overdo the tasks listed. The group suggested the documents primarily be bulleted lists rather than formal reports.

Jose recommended that all the work plans be attached to the minutes and that the TAC be ready to approve the plans at the next meeting (November 18, 2010).

7) **Preparation for December 9 Public Meeting.** The committee determined three public meetings should be held on Wednesday December 8 and Thursday, December 9. The meetings would show impairments, current conditions, describe the process, and provide a chance for public comments. The meetings would be held at these proposed locations and times:

Brawley

- December 8 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Elks' Lodge or Library or Lion's Center,
- Antonio Ortega will coordinate the Brawley location

El Centro

- December 9 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
- IID Board Room or Water Control Room
- Steve Charlton will coordinate the El Centro location

Calexico

- December 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Calexico Community Center on Dool Avenue or the Library
- Miguel Figueroa will be asked to coordinate the Calexico location

The meetings will be in an open house format with display boards prepared to show the strategic plan process and progress. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee will be available to answer questions. The chairs of each work group will be asked to make a presentation beginning at 1:30 p.m. at the El Centro meeting and at 6:30 p.m. for the other two meetings.

Several key meetings will need to be held in advance of the public meetings. These meetings include:

- Editorial Board of the Imperial Valley Press
- Any key reporters who might be interested
- Conference calls with TAC members helping to coordinate the public meetings
- Pre-visit meeting locations to prepare on the morning of November 18 prior to the next Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

- Promotores focus group (Miguel Figueroa, Luis Olmedo, and Ema Silva will be asked to coordinate the focus group meeting with promotores up and down the river).

The group decided it is premature to hold meetings with Mexican officials at this time.

A number of materials and resources will be needed:

- Press lists will be provided by Antonio Ortega
- Organizational lists will be provided by Antonio Ortega
- Collateral materials needed include:
 - Media Advisory (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Press Release (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Fact Sheet (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Announcement Flyer (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Public comments card (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Short announcements useful for organizational newsletters (Nettleton Strategies)
 - Press Release from elected(s) (TBD)
 - Bullet points for speakers (Nettleton Strategies)

Presentation Boards needed include:

- Overview board with at least these elements
 - AB1079
 - Steering Committee
 - Process
- Impairments/Remediation Work Group Board
 - Process
 - Map of key impairments
 - Contact info, etc.
- Visioning Work Group Board
 - Process
 - Map of some future ideas
 - Contact info, etc.
- Background/Funding Work Group Board
 - History / Key Points in Time / Timeline
 - Map of Existing Conditions (i.e. Background)
 - Contact info, etc.
- Map of the watershed with insets along the river for the following areas:
 - Calxico
 - Seeley
 - Brawley
 - Salton Sea

Other possible media collaterals were discussed but were determined to be not necessary for this first meeting. They included radio ad copy, TV ad/PSA copy

Discussion about who would help will be continued before and at the November 18 meeting. Decisions are needed about who will be the:

- Designated spokespersons
- Making media calls and contacts
- Spanish language translators
- Setup/take down team
- TAC Representation at the meetings

Discussion about public contact points will also be decided before and at the next meeting. Those contact points could include:

- A phone number for the public to call
- An Email address
- Social media such as Facebook and Twitter

Arrangements are being made to set up a CalEPA hosted web page that will include:

- Technical Advisory Committee documents such as agendas and notes.
- Historical reports about the New River
- Contact information

It was decided that time wasn't available to organize meetings with Imperial Valley organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Farm Bureau, elected bodies (City, County), Etc. Those meetings can be scheduled after the December 9 public meetings.

8) **Next Steps.** The following were determined as important next steps to be addressed at the next meeting on November 18, 2010:

- a) Review and approve work plans for all workgroups.
- b) Public meeting discussion including budget, spokespersons, etc.
- c) Presentation on the Port of Entry project by Jonathan Ballard.

9) **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:15 p.m.